LESSONS Moral and Christian, FOR YOUTH AND OLD AGE.

In Two SERMONS Preach'd at *Guild-hall* Chappel, *London*.

Chiefly intended for the Use of this City.

Published at Request.

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TO THE

READER.

THO the publishing of Discourses of this Nature need no Apology, being designed for so good an End, to Reclaim, if possible, this degenerate Age of ours; yet in truth the Cause of the Author's Printing these Sermons, was a Letter sent him from some well-

disposed Person, wholly unknown to him: Which is as follows:

SIR,

"Hoping that you will "not be offended at my "Resolution, I make bold "to acquaint you there-"with; Which is as fol-"lows. That whereas "you did Preach before "the Honorable the Lord "Mayor on *Sunday* last, "it so fell out that I was "then your Auditor. And "truly I want Words to

"ex-

" expreſs the Satisfaction
" I took in that Diſcourſe,
" and withall do judge,
" that it would be of
" mighty Advantage to
" Aged Perſons to have
" that Sermon made Pub-
" lick, there being not as
" I know of, any Diſ-
" courſe of that Nature
" made publick; eſpeci-
" ally in Words ſo plain
" and expreſſive of the
" Duty and Demeanour
" incumbent on them.
" And therefore Sir, I am
" bold to tell you, that as

" that Sermon was then
" taken in Characters, ſo
" I intend to make it pub-
" lick, unleſs your ſelf
" prevent my ſo doing,
" by cauſing it to be Print-
" ed by your own Order.
" Which indeed I rather
" deſire, ſince it muſt
" needs come more per-
" fect out of your Hand,
" than it can out of the
" hands of one, who wri-
" ting in haſte cannot but
" commit ſome Over-
" ſights: And eſpecially
" ſince you mentioned
ano-

"another Sermon before
"Preached in that Au-
"dience, which was ad-
"dreſt to Young Perſons.
"Which Sermon I did
"did not hear; but if
"there be in it thoſe
"Marks and Tokens of a
"Chriſtian Spirit as ap-
"peared in that other
"which was addreſt to
"Aged Men, it is pity
"but the ſame ſhould be
"made publick with it.
"And I hope you will do
"it, if you think fit to
"prevent this my Reſolu-
"tion,

" tion, which I shall for-
" bear to put in executi-
" on, till about a Month
" be past, that I may un-
" derstand your Determi-
" nation.

" *Sir*, I humbly beg
" your Pardon for this
" Boldness, and hope you
" will not take it in ill
" part, since it is the Good
" of Mankind, that con-
" strains me thereunto,

" *Who am yours*

I.

This

This Letter induced me to make these Two Discourses Publick, hoping they may prove as useful as they were by that Gentleman supposed to be. Tho I confess I have not been hasty to do it, till now a good while after, upon a particular occasion, Preaching one of them again, some that heard it thought it so seasonable for their own Spiritual Needs, that they desired to have it to Read, Consider, and make their Better use of; which is the True Cause of hastening this Impression.

pression. And thus wishing God's Blessing to accompany the reading of this Little Book, I bid the Reader Farewell.

J. STRYP.

Admo-

Admonitions TO YOUTH.

TIT. II. 6.

Young Men likewiſe exhort to be ſober minded.

THIS Honourable Auditory will excuſe the ubject I have taken for my reſent Diſcourſe, when they

 ſhall

ſhall conſider, how much the Future Good of the Univerſe depends upon the Sobriety of Youth. If they that are to come next upon the Stage of the World, to act their Parts there, would but avoid the Folly and Wickedneſs of the preſent Age, and frame themſelves to better and wiſer Courſes than are now commonly taken, how much happier would the Condition of Mankind be? For 'tis a very bad World we live in, (that we all feel, and as many as are Good, lament). And ſuch Root have Vices got in the Hearts of Men, that there is little hope to ſee any Amendment in our Days. And there

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is no Way but one to mend this Degenerate World under the mighty Grace of God; and that is, that Care be taken, that the next Generation be made better.

And to make that ſo, Youth muſt be better Principled, and better minded. Extraordinary Care muſt be taken of the Education of the Younger Sort; that they imbibe in their tender years Sobriety and Virtue; That their Souls may be imbued with a true Fear of God, and with right Apprehenſions of Virtue and Vice. They muſt be taught from their earlieſt Days to hate Sin; and they muſt be ſhewn the Baſeneſs, the Diſorders, the Irregularities and Miſchievouſneſs of it.

And they must be inwardly convinced of the Amiableness, and the Rectitude, and the Profitableness of a sober and just Life and Conversation. They must be learned to have a great Sense and Awe of Almighty God upon their Minds, and to make a great Conscience to Love their Neighbours, and to do them all exact Justice and Equity; and to be willing to be at Pains and Charges to do Offices of Friendship and Compassion to Men in their Necessities.

Could Young Men, who are the Expectation of the next Generation, and who must Act and bear their Parts in that could they, I say, be thus Disciplined, What a Golden Age would

would return after this cruel Iron Age of Ours?

This will be sufficient to justify the Subject I have taken in hand to Treat of before you, Worthy Citizens, namely, To give some Seasonable Admonitions to Youth; which is such a considerable Part of this great City: Some Thousands of Young Persons being transplanted hither every Year from all Parts of the Nation, to learn Trades and Ocupations, and for the necessary Services of it. And these are in the next Generation to supply your Places, and to be the Traders, Members and Magistrates of *London*. The Wisdom and Sobriety of the Inhabitants whereof hath such a notable Influ-

ence upon the Welfare and Prosperity not only of the City it self, but of the whole Nation.

Let us therefore review the Text, and the Occasion of it. *Young Men exhort to be Sober-minded.*

St. *Paul* had sent forth *Titus* to be a Preacher of the Gospel, and to instruct Men in the Ways of Christian Piety and Peace. And here in this Epistle to him he is instructing the Instructer, and directing him in a faithful Discharge of his Ministry. And particularly he admonisheth him to apply himself and his Instructions to the People with respect unto their Age. To those that were well grown in years: Aged Men,

Men, *Ver.* 2. That he ſhould exhort thoſe to be *Sober, Grave, Temperate*, &c. Aged Women, *Ver.* 3. that he ſhould remind them *to be in Behaviour as became Holineſs, not falſe Accuſers*, &c. And then *Ver.*6. the Apoſtle directs him alſo to ſuit his Inſtructions to the Young as well as to the Old: *Young Men likewiſe exhort to be Sober-minded.*

There be various Vices incident to Perſons according to their ſeveral Ages. The Elder Sort is addicted to ſuch and ſuch evil Ways and evil Qualities: And the Younger and more Gay, to many other ſorts of Folly. And particularly as their Spirits are more hot and vigorous, ſo they are more vi-

olently carried out towards external Objects, that promiſe them Pleaſure in the Enjoyment. And they cannot bear any Reſtraint. They muſt have their Deſires, however inconvenient or unlawful they be. Their Luſts, and their Appetites and Paſſions, muſt be ſatisfied. And they will break through all Bars and Impediments whatſoever for the Gratification thereof. The Pleaſures and Vanities of the World impetuouſly aſſault them; and they cannot withſtand. And they want an Ear to liſten to Reaſon and good Counſel, whenſoever theſe would ſtop them in their Careers. Their Humours muſt be gratified, whatever come

of

of it. And it is not Counsel and Consideration, nothing but Force, can keep them in. And therefore it is so necessary for such to be under Tutors and Governours.

And this is the proper Weakness and Frailty of Young Men; Great Addictedness to Pleasure, and Violent Pursuits of it. Now the contrary to this is Modesty or Sobriety. Which therefore *Titus* is bid here to take care to exhort them to. To be *Sober-minded*, Σωφρονεῖν. It signifies to use a Bridle, to be Modest, and to keep in our Lusts and our Passions within their due Bounds and Limits. That we gratify them not at any time, or in any thing, whatever

Cravings they make, if God forbid it, if Reaſon diſallow it, if it draw Sin or Inconveniency after it; if God ſhould be thereby diſobeyed, or Religion diſhonoured, or if it bring a Guilt upon Conſcience.

And thus you have ſeen what it is to be Sober-minded, and what Reaſon the Apoſtle had to adviſe *Titus* to exhort Young Men ſo to be. My Buſineſs now ſhall be only

I. To do that which the Apoſtle here exhorts *Titus*, and in him all Goſpel Miniſters to do, namely, To inſtruct Young Men to be Sober-minded.

II. That my Exhortation may take the better Effect, I ſhall

ſhall propound to them divers Motives and Conſiderations. And

III. I ſhall Conclude all with ſome ſhort Addreſs to them.

I.

To Exhort Young Men to be Sober-minded. And they have certainly great need of it, becauſe there are ſo few that are ſo. The younger ſort is ſadly corrupted, and vitiated ever from their tender Age. They have imbibed looſe Principles, that may beſt comport with looſe Inclinations, and ſuit to their Luſts. And as they grow up in Years, they grow up as faſt in Folly and Raſhneſs. They do not love

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Advice, and Deteſt ſober Counſel, and hate to be checked in their Purſuits and Appetites: and are apt to deſpiſe and ſcoff at their Elders, and to think themſelves far wiſer than they: That they may the more ſecurely and uncontrollably follow their Vanities. And ſo they commonly ſtain their Souls with grievous Blots of Sin and Wickedneſs. It is a ſad Conſideration indeed to obſerve how vicioully diſpoſed the Youth of our Age for the moſt part is. And it is a rare thing to ſee a Man young in Years, Sober, and Modeſt in his Manners, Ingenuous in his Behaviour, chooſing good Courſes, and treading in the Steps of Virtue. This I ſay

is ſomewhat rare to ſee; ſcarce one in a Thouſand. And this I ſpeak, not only of the Youth of the common ſort, but of the Superiour Ranks and Degrees among us: the Children of Worſhipful and Honourable Families: Who, if they live, muſt have a great Influence upon many their Dependents, their Servants, Tenants, and Inferiours, that will follow their Example. So that whole Towns, whole Counties, the whole Kingdom is in danger to be corrupted and ſpoiled by their Means.

And therefore ſurely there is high Reaſon moſt earneſtly to deal with Youth by all the Ways and Means poſſible, to Seaſon their early Years with So-

Sobriety, to excite them to be Wiſe, and to lay Reſtraint upon themſelves, and to prevail upon them not to run out into thoſe Exceſſes of Riot and Wantonneſs that others do. To all Young Men therefore, I ſay, as St. *Paul* did to young *Timothy*; *Flee alſo youthful Luſts. But follow Righteouſneſs, Faith, Charity, Peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure Heart*, 2 Tim. II. 22. Flee theſe Luſts, as ye would flee from a Serpent. For they have as much deadly Venom. But that my Exhortation may take the better Effect,

II.

II.

I ſhall in the next place propound divers Motives and Conſiderations for this Purpoſe.

1. Let young Men conſider Seriouſly what Obligations lye upon them from God. Oh! let them remember how peculiarly good and gracious he hath been to them. And will not they expreſs their Senſe of Gratitude to this their good God, by being Sober, and keeping his Commandments? It was his Goodneſs that brought them into the World, and provided them kind and indulgent Parents, that cheriſhed them, and moſt tenderly

ly brought them up in their helpleſs Infancy. *Their helpleſs Infancy* I ſay. For a Humane Creature of all others, when it is firſt born, is moſt unable to help it ſelf, and muſt inevitably periſh from the very Womb, without the mere Mercy of God encline others to interpoſe their tender Care of it, to feed, and cloath, and keep it warm, and defend it from Injury. This is God's Goodneſs, thus to incline the Hearts of others to us in this poor forlorn State wherein we are caſt, when we firſt come into the World.

And it is God's Goodneſs ſtill to us, that under all the Troubles and Sorrows we create our Parents and Friends, and

and our many unhanſome and diſobliging Carriages towards them, while we are thus young, their Tenderneſs and Patience towards us ſtill perſeveres and holds out. And as we grow up in Days and Months, and Years, they take care of our Youth, to Educate and Inſtruct us, and to Supply us with whatſoever we need, Streightning themſelves for our Accommodation; and procure to have us informed in ſuch Knowledge, Arts and Sciences, as may enable us to provide for our Selves, and to live comfortably when they are dead and gone, and can take no more Care of us.

These Inſtincts of Love, Tenderneſs and Kindneſs, are all

all owing to God, that inſpired our Friends and Relations with theſe Indulgences towards us.

Moreover, 'tis his Goodneſs to thee, O Young Man, that he hath made thee a Rational Creature; given thee Reaſon and Underſtanding, and advanced thee above the Rank of inferiour Creatures; That *teacheth thee more than the Beaſts of the Earth, and maketh thee Wiſer than the Fouls of Heaven*, Job xxxv. 11. It is *Elihu's* Contemplation.

Again, It is his Goodneſs to thee, O young Man, that when thou haſt not remembred thy Creator, but haſt ſo often, and ſo ſadly forgotten him, he hath ſpared thee, and

not

not punished thee with some grievous Judgment in the Act and Commission of thy Sin. Thou hast broken his holy and awful Commandments (it may be from the first Commandment to the last) notwithstanding thou hast known them, and been taught them by thy Parents, and by thy Instructers. Nay, and in the mean while thou hast been so far from Repentance, that thou hast hardly been sensible what a young Rebel thou hast been to thy great and good God. And yet he hath forbore to strike thee, as he justly might.

This, and a great deal more might be added to shew, what mighty Obligations young Men lye under to their Maker. And

ſhould not this ſtir them up to love and fear him, and to reſtrain themſelves from doing any thing to offend and anger him; but rather to lead their future Lives in that Sobriety, Care and Watchfulneſs, that would be ſo acceptable to him?

2. Young Men have a Proſpect of a longer Tract of Time to live, than the more Elderly. And therefore Sobriety is neceſſary for them, that they may order and diſpoſe themſelves, that the Series and Courſe of their Lives may be comfortable and happy to them. Which it cannot be, if Men begin with Vice and Licentiouſneſs. Man's Life is a Race. Now if a Man were

to

to run a Race, and ſhould ſet out with all the Violence and Irregularity that ever he could, he were like to Tire before he were got half way: And ſo ſhould render all the reſt of his Way very wearifome and irkſome to him. But if he began with more Deliberation, and ſet out with more Sobriety, he would with more Eaſe and Comfort hold out all along the reſt of the Way he was to go. And juſt ſo it is with our Lives. Moſt Men ſet out this Race of humane Life with a violent Propenſion to Evil, and a continual Gratification of the Luſts and Deſires of the Fleſh; Spend their Health, and their Credit, and their Eſtates oftentimes too, in Debauchery and Diſ-

Disorder. And so the Thred of their Lives is either cut off in the midst, or if it be not, all the rest is spent in Vexation and Trouble, in Sickness & Sorrow, in Poverty, and a Thousand Miseries, that our first and early Follies have drawn upon us.

And therefore, O young Man, as thou wouldst pass that Life that God hath allotted thee in this World, (how long or how short soever it be) with Peace and Comfort, the best way is to begin it well, and to avoid those Follies and Errors that are so apt to defile that Age. For

3. Consider further, how the Sins of our Youth will create much Uneasiness and Sorrow afterward, when we grow fur-

further into years. And this will appear in these two respects.

First, God sometimes punisheth a Man many years after for the Iniquities of his Youth. There be many Afflictions and Calamities that befall us from the Hand of God, which make our Lives not seldom very grievous unto us. And in our Search into the Causes of them, one Rank of them must be the Sins of our Youth. To this it was that *Job* attributed his present Extremities, *Job* xiii. 26. *Thou makest me to possess the Iniquities of my Youth.* *Job* was a good Man. He set God's Fear before his Eyes, and particularly he was a Man of great Charity and large Compassion

to

to all poor, neceſſitous People. And that made him ſpeak ſo largely in his own Juſtification. But yet he was it ſeems, in his early Age carried away as well as others with youthful Luſts and Pleaſures, and did not remember his Creatour as he ſhould have done in thoſe days. And this he concludes was a Reaſon why God laid his Hand ſo heavy upon him: *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the Iniquities of my Youth.* And that is the Obſervation that *Zophar* one of *Job*'s Friends, makes of thoſe that begin early in Sin, *That their Bones are full of the Sins of their Youth,* Job xx. 11. It ſeems to mean, thoſe Diſeaſes that the Sins of Men's Youth oftentimes leave behind them

in their Bodies. It ſticks to their very Bones; and is appointed by God to be a ſevere Remembrancer, as long as they live, of the vile and wretched Courſes that they took when they were young.

Why did *David* pray to God not to remember the Sins of his Youth? *Remember not, Lord, the Sins of my Youth*, Pſal. xxv. 7. Remember them not now, O Lord, in mine elder Age to puniſh me for them. *David* had left the Vanities of his Youth, and was become a Man after God's own Heart; and yet *David* met with very great Afflictions and Sufferings; and God ſeemed in them to have remembred the Sins and Follies of his

Youth. For God, tho he Pardoneth Sins, and imputeth not unto us our former Iniquities, where he sees a penitent and reformed Heart and Life, yet it is seldom but he takes some temporary Punishments upon Man for them first or last. As he pardoned the Sin of the Golden Calf, yet when he Visited, he would visit upon the *Israelites* that Sin. And therefore a good Man as long as he lives in his Prayers and Devotions, among the rest of his Sins, prays for the Pardon of his Youthful Sins, and that God would be merciful to him, and not punish him for them; which he very often doth, to the rendring the Christian's Life bitter unto him, it may be as long as he lives. *Se-*

Secondly, The Sins of your Youth will create much Uneasiness and Sorrow to you, in respect of the Reflexions that your Consciences will make against you many years after. The Remembrance of your former Sins will be like a heavy Burden upon your Conscience. Conscience will put you in mind, it may be twenty, or thirty, or forty years after, of the Wickedness of your Youth; of your Lyes and Shifts to conceal your Extravagances, of your Disobedience and Obstinacy to your indulgent Parents, of your Scoffing at their good Counsels, of your Stealing from them to spend upon your Lusts, of the Griefs and Afflictions you have caused to their gray

Heads; and of all the rest of your Uncleanness, of your Debaucheries and Excesses. And if you have any Grace in you, and have not utterly sinned away Conscience, these things will now and then fly in your Face, and be like so many Worms, to bite and sting your very Hearts.

I dare appeal for the Truth of this unto your Selves, (as many as God hath given Grace unto afterward to grow wiser and better) how your youthful Lusts and Sins do rise up sometimes and reproach and upbraid you; and the thoughts that you have been so bad, and committed so much Sin in secret, do still by Fits molest and trouble you. I have known a Per-

Perſon that hath condoled to me ſome particular Follies and Errors of his Youth thirty or forty years after, with exceſſive Bitterneſs and Anguiſh of Mind. And tho, as he told me, he had moſt heartily repented of thoſe Raſhneſſes and Sins, yet the Conſcience thereof made his whole Life uncomfortable to him, and ſo interrupted his Devotions and Services of God, that he could not look up to him with any Comfort, but was ſo Self-condemned, that he was afraid that God would throw all his Service like Dung back into his Face, becauſe they proceeded from ſo unworthy a Wretch as he had been.

And therefore let that be another Motive to young People to take heed now to themselves, that they preserve themselves in Sobriety and Virtue, that they may not afterward have such severe Reckonings, and lay a Foundation of so much Trouble and Sorrow to imbitter their future Days.

4. On the other hand, consider the Comforts that will arise to Age from an innocent well-spent-Youth. When we come to Years, and begin to grow Gray, and our Age puts us in mind of our Mortality, and that we must not, can not tarry much longer in this World then we begin, I trust, to think seriously what sort of Entertainment we are like to meet with

with in the other World, and how God will look upon us when we come to dye; and how it is like to fare with us to all Eternity. And this will put us upon thinking on our past Lives. And our Thoughts will run back to our early years; how we led our Lives then; how God was sought and served by us from our Youth. And if after this Search we find, that God's Grace restrained us from youthful Follies, and that we remembred our Creator in the Days of our Youth; that we were just and honest, sober and clean, then there cannot happen a greater comfort to us: It will mightily strengthen our hopes, that we are among the Number of

God's Elect, and that our Lot is among the Juſt.

Beſides, the Comfort of our Youth ſpent ſoberly and well, appears in this, that a Man hath kept up his Credit and Reputation throughout his whole Life; that from his Youth to his Old Age he hath conſtantly walked as became a good Man; that he hath never ſtained nor beſpotted his Life with deliberate and habitual Sins and Evils: that his Life hath been all of a piece, and his Youth hath not ſhamed his Old Age. What a Comfort and a Rejoycing will this be? There were two Sorts of Old Men among the Jews: One Sort were ſuch as had lived looſly in their younger days, and af-

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terwards took up, and grew Sober and Wiſe. But there was another ſort among them, whoſe Youth and Old Age both were well ſpent. They began well, and ſo they continued. Theſe two Sorts of Old Men in one of the great Feaſts at the Temple, uſed to ſtand in one of the Courts, and pronounce theſe Words: The former ſort ſaid thus, *Bleſſed be our Old Age, that hath made amends for the Sins of our Youth.* But the latter ſaid with more Comfort, *Bleſſed be our Youth, that hath not ſhamed our Old Age.* For indeed there is a Shame belongs to a Man as long as he lives, for the Intemperance and Vices of his younger Years. But when any of us

have had the Grace to ſpend our young days well, it will be a Reputation and Honour unto our Old Age. And the Conſideration of it, as it is matter of Thankfulneſs to God, that hath given us ſuch Grace in our Youth, ſo it is matter of Peace and Comfort unto us, that we have kept up a fair Name in the World all our Days.

5. Young Men are ſubject to Death as well as the Elder. Nay, ſometimes the younger are taken off, when thoſe that are gone further into Age and Years remain behind. And therefore ought not they to be Sober, that whenſoever they dye, they may not be taken unprovided? It is a fooliſh thing

thing to put off the Purpoſes of a good Life on this Score, that Men are young, and may have many years more to live, becauſe nothing is ſo uncertain as the Life of Man. And we ſee Thouſands of Inſtances of Men, young in Years, ſtrong in Body, vigorous in Health, cut down ſuddenly by Fevers, or ſome Accident or other: And they dye and go to their long home, as well as ſuch who have lived to Gray Hairs. And what a ſad thing would it be for a young Man to ſuffer himſelf to be ſo cheated out of Heaven and Happineſs, becauſe of the Conceit that he was young, and might have lived many years more? Oh! it ought to be every Man's

Care

Care above all his other Cares, to think of Death, and to prepare for the main Chance; that when he goes out of this World, he may paſs into a better, and leave a good Name behind them. And of all the Madneſſes of Youth, certainly this is one of the greateſt, that they are ſo apt to put away the Day of their Death from them; and to indulge to all Senſuality, as tho they were ſure of many future years; and to cry, that it will be time enough hereafter to grow Sober. And then (Alas!) Death comes on a ſudden, and ſurpriſes them with all their Sins and Faults, and Follies about them. And ſo they are undone to all Eternity.

And

And therefore it is the only wiſe Courſe for young Men to take, *Viz.* To Fear God in their Youth, and to Depart from Evil at this preſent Time, that in caſe Death ſhould overtake them, as it hath done others as young and flouriſhing as they, it may not endanger their Everlaſting Well-being.

6. To name no more, in order to a ſober Converſation, let young Men conſider ſome notable Inſtances, of Perſons that have been exemplarily good from their Youth. For, thanks be to God, however corrupt the Generality of Youth are and have been, yet there have been ſome admirable Inſtances, of young Men that have begun, and held out well

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in a holy, chaſt, wiſe and Godly Converſation. And methinks theſe Examples ſhould inflame Youth to labour to imitate them, and to live and to do as they have done. Youth is apt to Aſpire, and to be Ambitious, and to reach after high things. Certainly there is no Ambition, no Aſpiring, like that of endeavouring to come up to that Perfection and Glory, that ſome young Men like themſelves, have done.

What a brave young Perſon was *Obadiah*, one of *Ahab*'s Courtiers. A wicked Prince, and a wicked Court; but yet *Obadiah* was not infected by either; but feared the Lord from his Youth, when almoſt all the reſt had caſt him behind their

their Backs. He would not turn Idolater, when the King and every one elſe did. No, he feared the Lord from his Youth. So he tells *Elijah*; *But I thy Servant fear the Lord from my Youth*, 1 Kin. xviii. 11. And that made him do ſuch an adventurous Act, to hide God's Prophets by Fifty in a Cave, and feed them with Bread and Water, when *Jezabel* had ſlain ſo many as ſhe could find; and probably had made it Death to conceal them. And what a World of Good did that ſingle good Man in thoſe wicked Times? And that chiefly, becauſe of that Fear of God which poſſeſſed his Mind from his Youth; and ſo influenced all his after-Age.

Again,

Again, What an incomparable Person was young King *Josiah*; and what admirable Service did he do for God and his Honour, when his Kingdom had been by the Default of former Kings, so polluted with Idolatry? What a Reformation did he make in *Judah*, when he was very Young? What Zeal for God was he endued withall; and how sweet is the Remembrance of him unto this Day, through so many successive Generations of the World? That a Man so young in years should have such a great Sense of God upon his Soul, and have the Courage to do so much for him. Of him thus doth *Jesus* the

the Son of *Syrach* ſpeak, *Eccluſ.* xlix. 1, 2. *The Remembrance of* Joſias *is like the Compoſition of the Perfume that is made by the Art of the Apothecary. It is ſweet as Hony in all Mouths, and as Muſick at a Banquet of Wine. He behaved himſelf uprightly in the Converſion of his People* (he means from their Idolatry) *and took away the Abominations of Iniquity. He directed his Heart unto the Lord, and in the Time of the Ungodly he eſtabliſhed the Worſhip of God.* And that which was the Glory of all the reſt, this he did even in his young and tender Age. *In the Eighth Year of his Reign* (that is when he was but Sixteen years old) *while he was yet young, he began to ſeek after the God of* David

David *his Father*, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3. *And in the Twelfth Year* (that is, being but Twenty years of Age) *he began to purge* Judah *and* Jeruſalem *from the high Places and the Groves*, &c.

Job alſo from his tendereſt Age was diſpoſed and addicted to Piety. He loved, and was tender of the Poor even from his Childhood; as he tells us himſelf: *If I have with-held the Poor from their Deſire, or have cauſed the Eyes of the Widow to fail: Or have eaten my Morſel my ſelf alone, and the Fatherleſs hath not eaten thereof*, Job xxxi. 16,17,18. And then obſerve what followeth, *For from my* YOUTH, *he* (that is, the Fatherleſs) *was brought up with*

with me as with a Father. (From his Youth he was as a Father to the Fatherless.) *And I have guided her* (that is, the Widow before spoken of) *from my Mother's Womb.* From my Mother's Womb; he means, from his very first Age, when he was very young, he had a Love and a Compassion for poor Widows; and when he was but a Child, he shewed himself a Father to Orphans. And as he grew on in years, still he persevered in the same charitable, compassionate Sense of their Wants; and according to his large Ability and Authority, relieved them.

Such another early good Man was *Jesus* the Son of *Syrach*, who was the Compiler of that ex-

excellent Book of *Eccleſiaſticus*, ſo repleniſht with Sentences of great Wiſdom, and Rules of Admirable Morality and good Life. This Man from his Youth thirſted after Wiſdom, (that is, the Fear of God) and prayed to God to beſtow it on him; and added his own Endeavour, and obtain'd it. Which he thus relateth to us himſelf, Ecclus. li. 13, &c. *When I was yet young, or ever I went abroad, I deſired Wiſdom openly in my Prayer. I prayed for her before the Temple, and will ſeek her out even to the End. Even from the Flower till the Grape was ripe*, (that is, from the Spring of his Years till the Autumn of his Age) *my Heart delighted in her; my Foot went the*

right way. From my Youth up I ſought after her. And ſo he goes on relating his Youth ſpent in the Purſuit of Virtue. *I purpoſed to do after her, and earneſtly I followed that which was good. My Soul hath wreſtled with her, and in my Doing I was exact. I ſtretched forth my hands to the Heavens above, and bewailed mine Ignorances of her. I directed my Soul unto her, and I found her in Pureneſs;* (that is, in my Pure Age, before the Defilements of Age corrupted it) *I have had my Heart joyned with her from the Beginning.* And this excellent young Man was *Jeſus* the Son of *Syrach.*

But there was another young *Jeſus*, greater than this *Jeſus*, even our ever bleſſed Lord and

and Master CHRIST JESUS. We have not much recorded to us of his young years, till he came to display himself for the Messiah about the Age of Thirty. But what is set down in Holy Writ before that time concerning him, sheweth, how early his Piety appeared. It is said of the Days next after his Infancy, That *the Child grew, and waxed strong in Spirit, filled with Wisdom, and the Grace of God was upon him*, Luk. ii. 40. However weak in Body, young in years he was, yet he was Strong in Spirit, and filled with Wisdom. And the next News you have of him was, that being but Twelve Years Old, when he and his Parents came to *Jerusalem* to Worship God,

God, he goes into the Temple, and ſits among the Doctors to confer with them upon Points of Religion; and thought himſelf obliged ſo early to be occupied about his Father's Buſineſs. As he tells his Parents that had loſt him, and found him at laſt in the Temple; *Wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my Father's Buſineſs?*

To all theſe admirable Examples of excellent Young men in former Times, I will add one modern one; And that is of K. *Edward* VI. our Engliſh *Joſiah*. Of his rare Parts, and extraordinary Learning even in his Childhood, I ſhall not ſpeak: But of his good Diſpoſition and Religious Mind, I ſhall make a little mention, for the

the enflaming of Youth, (especially Youth of Nobility and Blood) to labour as much as they can to be such as he was. He was addicted to a Fear of God from his youngest years. And that appeared in the mighty Reverence he bore to the Holy Scriptures. When something he was minded to have was somewhat higher than he could well reach, and one of his Play-fellows brought him a great Bible to stand upon, he refused it with Indignation, abhorrring to shew any such Irreverence towards that Holy Book, as he conceived it would be, if he should have trod upon it.

He came to the Crown at the Age of Nine Years, and

Two

Two or Three Months; and there is an Author, that lived in those Times, and knew that young King well, that at his Coronation, when Three Swords were presented to him, in token of the Three Kingdoms to which he was advanc'd, the Royal Youth said to the Nobles about him, that there was one Sword yet wanting. And when they asked him what that was, he answered, *The Bible*. "That "Book, added he, is the Sword "of the Spirit, and much to "be preferred before these "other Swords. He that Rules "without it, is not to be called "God's Minister, nor ought "to bear the Name of King.

Bal de Vir. Illustrib.

"Under that we ought to "Live, to Fight, to Govern. And when he had ſaid theſe, and the like Words, he commanded the Bible to be brought and with the greateſt Reverence to be carried before him.

When he was between Eleven and Twelve Years of Age, he wrote, without the Help of any Inſtructer, an ingenious Tract in *French*, againſt the Abuſes put upon the World by Popery. Wherein by Reaſon and Variety of Places of Scripture, he confuted moſt of the Popiſh Errors.

Throughout his Short Reign, he had a peculiar Care of Religion, and gave all Encouragement to the right Reforming and Settling of it on Scripture Foundations. He

He gave free Invitation and gracious Reception to all Forreign Profeſſors of the Goſpel, perſecuted at home for their Religion. So that tho he were but a Child, he was a Father, a true Nurſing Father, to God's Church and People. And truly it was not without a notable Providence of God, not to be forgotten, and which under God was the great Cauſe of the Preſervation of the Reformed Religion, that while the Goſpel at that Time was miſerably oppreſt, almoſt in all Parts of the World, in *Flanders*, in *Germany*, in *France*, in *Spain*, in *Italy*, in *Poland* (for in all theſe Countries the Religion had already taken footing) and Combinations were entred

into by the Rulers of the World to extirpate it every where; *England* was in this King's Reign the common *Asylum* for Religious and Learned Men to fly unto. And hither they flocked daily both for Shelter and Subsistence. And Abundance of Annuities and Pensions did the young Godly King grant unto them out of his own Treasures; and bestowed many of these Exiles in Places in the Church, and in both the Universities.

And such was his Care for the Education of Youth in good and Christian Manners, that during his Short Reign, which was not Seven Years, he founded more Schools throughout all Places of the Na-

Nation, than I believe did all the *Norman* Kings that Reigned before him put together. And I find that in little less then the space of twelve months he founded at least twelve Free-Schools. And his Care of the Education of Youth, further appeared in the Order he took in his own Family for his Henchmen, that is his Pages, and other Youths attending him. For whom he appointed a School on purpose, and retained a Schoolmaster. And for his Encouragement assigned him a Salary for Life.

And as for his Charitable Mind, it was scarce to be paralell'd. And this City feels the good effect of it to this day, and will do I hope to the

World's End. For excited by a Sermon, which was preached before him by *Ridley* the Martyr, then Biſhop of *London*, he ſettled upon your City for the Relief of your Poor, the Hoſpital of St. *Bartholomew*, the *Gray-Friars* Church near *Newgate*, now called Chriſt's Hoſpital, and *Bridewell* the Antient Manſion of the *Engliſh* Kings, and the *Savoy* too, with the Lands thereof. But this laſt Gift he lived not to finiſh. Yet he had ſuch a real Intention to paſs it to the City, that he left it in his Will, That the Grant made to the Mayor and City of *London* touching the *Savoy* and the Lands thereof, ſhould be performed.

And

And as he lived ſo he dyed, moſt piouſly and devoutly, recommending moſt heartily himſelf and his Kingdoms to God. He had a grave and manly Mind in a Young Body. All Foreigners that ſaw or heard of him, admired him, and wrote vaſt Characters of him. *Cardanus* the great Philoſopher, who ſaw and talked with him, reported in a printed Book, *That all the Graces were in him*, and that *he lookt like the Miracle of a Man*. *Calius Secundus Curio*, another great learned Foreigner of *Baſil*, called him a *Prince of Divine Hopes*, and a *Godlike Youth*, adding, "That had he lived "to adult years, and had come "to the Government of the

"Kingdom, freed from the "Tuition of his Courtiers, (which were none of the beſt) "what Realm on Earth had "been happier, what Nation "ever more bleſſed? But God "was minded only to ſhew "him to the World, and ſuffer "him no longer to abide in it. But I muſt refrain, begging your Pardons for ſaying ſo much, it being hard in ſuch a pleaſant Subject to contain my ſelf.

To haſten to a Concluſion. Are not young Men ſtirred up by theſe brave Examples that I have ſet before them? Can they conſider theſe Men, how well they began their Lives, how Serviceable and Zealous they were for God and his Glo-

ry,

ry, and what Attainments they made in Virtue and Goodneſs, even in their tender Years; and are they not inflamed to follow ſuch notable Patterns? Is it not more for their Reputation and Honour, for their Comfort and the Satisfaction of their Conſciences, than to run with the Heard of Youth in this our evil Age towards all Looſneſs and Licentiouſneſs, Filthineſs and Uncleanneſs in their Words and Deeds, to the Pollution of their Souls, and the drawing down the Anger of God upon them.

III.

And now to make an end, I cannot think but that all ingenuous Youth, after all that I have ſaid, will feel ſtrong Inclinations in themſelves to take the Apoſtles Counſel, to be *Sober-minded*: To Watch their Affections, to lay upon themſelves the Bridle of Continency and Modeſty, to curb and rein up their Paſſions and their unruly Deſires; to chuſe the Fear of God rather than the Pleaſures of Sin for a Seaſon. If you want direction in this Work; if you would know how you ſhould keep your ſelves clean, *David* will teach you: Who asketh this needful

ful Question, and answereth it full well: *Wherewithal shall a Young Man cleanse his Way? By taking heed thereto according to thy Word*, Psal. cxix. 9. Or, according to the Old Translation, *By ruling himself after thy Word.* Oh! Let God's Word be thy Guide and thy Rule. And then thou hast God himself and his Holy Spirit to be thy Director: Who is best able to instruct thee, and shew thee the Courses thou oughtest to take, and which will prove most advantagious to thee. Stir not an Inch from the Prescriptions of God's Word. Let that be thy Maxim and thy Principle.

'Tis a dangerous World we live in, and we ought to have our

our Wits about us, how to behave our ſelves in all the various Circumſtances of humane Life: leſt by ſome Slip or Error, or Inadvertency in the Beginning of our ſetting out, we draw miſery and trouble upon our ſelves ever after. And we ought to have ſome Wiſe Perſon to be our Counſellor for this Purpoſe. But there is no Counſellor ſo ſafe as God himſelf. And then we have him for our Counſellor, when we take his Word for our Rule, and ask Counſel there. Oh! therefore let all young Men diligently read the Scriptures, and make them their Study and their Practice. And let them never doubt to follow moſt ſtrictly the Counſels

ſels and Admonitions thereof, however at firſt Sight they may ſeem inconvenient or dangerous to take. For be aſſured Integrity and Righteouſneſs, Truth and Innocency, and an Awe of God, upon which all the Precepts of Holy Scripture are founded, will bear a Man out beſt at the laſt, and give our Lives the beſt Concluſion.

I conclude all therefore with the Son of *Syrach*'s Exhortation to young Folks to get the true Wiſdom; *Draw near unto me ye unlearned, and dwell in the Houſe of Learning. Buy her for your ſelves without Mony. Put your Neck under the yoke, and let your Soul receive Inſtruction. She is hard at hand to find*

find ------ *Work your Work betimes* (that is, while you are Young) *and in his time he will give the your Reward*, Ecclus. li. 23, 25, 26, 30. Unto which Reward God Almighty bring us all, *Amen.*

Admonitions

TO THE

AGED.

TIT. II. 2.

That the Aged Men be Sober, Grave, Temperate, Sound in Faith, in Charity, in Patience.

THE laſt time I was called to ſpeak in this Audience,

ence, I took upon me to be a Remembrancer to Young Men, and exhorted them with many Arguments to Virtue and Goodneſs, from the ſixth verſe of this Chapter, where the Apoſtle bids *Timothy* exhort *Young Men to be Sober-minded.* Now I ſhall carry over my Diſcourſe from the Young unto the Old, and ſpeak, if I can, ſomething in ſeaſon to you that are the grave Magiſtrates and Citizens; on whom lyes the Government of this great City, and the preſent good Eſtate of it ſo much depends: You that have lived in former Days, and are able to tell of the times that are paſt; You, to whom God hath ſhewn many Noble Acts of his Power

and

and Providence. Give me leave now to be your Monitor alſo, that joyning with your Experience a prudent, a ſober and a godly Converſation, you may in your Places and Callings, contribute to the bringing down God's Bleſſing upon your ſelves, and upon us all.

And truly it is ſad to conſider, what very Slaves to Vice and Sin many Aged Men are. Their Paſſions and their Follies are grown up with them. The ſinful Frailties of their Youth are turned into the very Habits of their Old Age: and the longer they have lived the worſe they have been, inſtead of growing better and wiſer. They have ſmarted many times paſt of their Lives for their

Vices

Vices and Iniquities, and yet have not had the Grace to mend them, nor to forſake thoſe things that have coſt them dear. Their bought Experience hath not made them wiſer. They have felt God's Hand many a time upon them for their Sins, and yet they remain as bad as they were before. And ſo they grow Old and Gray-headed in their Evil Courſes, as tho they reſolved to live and dye in them. *Days ſhould teach Wiſdom*, ſaith the Spirit of God ſomewhere; but neither Days nor Years have taught them Wiſdom. Vanity and Folly hath been bound up in their Hearts from their Childhood; and it is ſo faſt bound up there, that it remains

mains with them even to their Old Age; and none of God's Rods of Correction have driven it out. How many Men and Women have we known, nay perhaps do know, far gone in Years, that have ſpent Forty or Fifty, or Threeſcore Winters in the World, and are paſſionate and haſty, Covetous and Worldly minded, unclean in their Deſires, Blaſphemous and Vain in their Speeches, wofully negligent of God and their Souls to this Day. They draw near to Eternity, and yet little think of it. They are going to their long Homes, and have one Foot in their Graves, and yet take no care to make themſelves fit for that other World: And have little

little regard of putting their Souls in such a Posture as they may be able with Comfort to stand before God. Gray Hairs are here and there upon them, and they consider it not.

Well then, be you Judges, whether even Aged Men have not need to be called upon, and to have a Monitor as well as the Younger. St. *Paul* knew this well enough; and therefore he instructs *Titus* to exhort the Aged to be *Sober, Grave, Temperate, Sound in Faith, in Charity, in Patience.* In all which respects the Aged in his Time were oftentimes too defective, and perhaps were neither Sober, Grave nor Temperate, however Old they were, nor Sound in Faith, in

Charity

Charity nor Patience. But ſure it is, theſe things are mighty becoming Years, and are proper Leſſons and Practices for Elder Age; Namely, Sobriety, Gravity, Temperance, Soundneſs in Faith, in Charity and in Patience. Theſe, O Fathers and Brethren, will be very great Ornaments of your Age; and not only Ornaments of your Age, but of your holy Profeſſion too.

Now that I may diſcourſe ſuitably and profitably upon this Argument, I ſhall do theſe two or three Things.

I. I ſhall ſhew you what that Behaviour is that is ſuitable unto Aged Men.

II. Unto

II. Unto this holy Behaviour I ſhall excite and ſtir them up by ſome Conſiderations.

III. I ſhall make a Practical Concluſion of my Diſcourſe.

I.

I ſhall ſhew Elderly Men what that Good Behaviour is that they ſhould follow after, and make their Practice: And for that I ſhall refer my ſelf unto the Apoſtle in the Text. I ſhall not offer mine own Conceptions here to the Aged, but what *Paul* the Aged, nay *Paul* the Saint, the Inſpired, offers to them. He it is that would have them inſtructed to be 1. Sober, 2. Grave, 3. Tem-

3. Temperate, 4. Sound in Faith, 5. Sound in Charity, 6. Sound in Patience. And that you may know the full Import and Meaning of each of these, which will make a very accomplisht Old Age, I shall speak of them distinctly.

1. Aged Men must be *Sober*. This Word our Translaters do interpret sometimes, To be *Watchful*, and sometimes, To be Νηφαλίους, *Sober*. And therefore *Bullinger* in his Exposition of this Place useth both words, *Vigilantes ac Sobrios*. Which two Expressions may inform us of the full Sense and Meaning of it.

First, They must be Sober, that is, Abstemious in Drink; avoiding all Excess in that.

That

That it may not impair their Health, nor their Underſtanding: Both which Age renders ſo infirm, and places in ſo uncertain and tickliſh a Condition. And therefore eſpecially Men in Years ſhould not be Drunkards or Sots, but uſe Wine or Strong Drink moderately. Which if they (eſpecially) take in too great Quantity, it will ſoon wear their Bodies out, and weaken their Minds, Memories, Judgments and Underſtandings. Which Age of it ſelf will do at laſt, and needs not to be helped and furthered by our own Vices. And indeed to ſee an Old Man a Drunkard, to ſee him intoxicating himſelf, and falling into all the frantick and fooliſh

Fro-

Frolicks that that Sin draws with it, how odious is it; how unbecoming that Gravity that Years call for? And what an abominable ill Example will this give unto Children, and the younger ſort? And what a Sport and Paſtime will an old Drunkard render himſelf unto ſuch, who are called upon to reverence the Aged, and to reſpect Gray-Hairs? And what an Aggravation and weight of Guilt will it add unto the old Man's Drunkenneſs, that he who by his Age ought to excel others, and to go before them in a vertuous and ſober Demeanour, ſhould hereby invite them to Sin, and tempt them to follow him in theſe Exceſſes? A thing which

Young People are very apt to do, *viz.* to follow such Examples; especially if they have a Dependence upon the Elder: If they be their Masters, or Fathers, their Landlords, or Superiors.

This then is one Sense of the word *Sober*, that is, Not addicted to too much Wine, and to use no more than may tend to the supportation of Nature, and preserving the Body in Health.

Secondly, They must be sober, that is, they must be *watchful*. For so the word also signifies. And therefore *Watch*, and *be sober*, are the Phrases that the Scripture puts together, as being very near of kin, or all one. *Therefore let*

us not ſleep, as do others; but let us WATCH, *and be* SOBER: So St. *Paul.* 1 *Theſſ.* v. 6.
And ſo the Apoſtle St. *Peter*, *Be* SOBER, *be* VIGILANT, or Watchful. 1 *Pet.* v. 8.
But in other places, this very Word, *Be Sober*, is tranſlated *Be watchful.* So St. *Paul* exhorts *Timothy*, *Watch thou in all things.* 1 *Tim.* iv. 5. Νῆφε.
And ſo St. *Peter*, *Watch unto Prayer.* 1 *Pet.* iv. 7. Νήψατε.
Where the word *Watch* is of the ſame Original, with the word *Sober*, in the Text. Hence we may infer, That the Meaning of this word, and perhaps the chief Meaning and Senſe of it, relates to *Watchfulneſs.*

A great and a proper Duty

and Exercise for Aged Men above all others, To watch for their Lord's Coming, whose Time is so near spent in the course of Nature. To watch, and be in Expectation of their Departure into another World. To *Watch unto Prayer*, in the place before mentioned, or *In Prayers*, as the Words may be rendred. That is, to be always praying unto God; lifting up their Hearts to him in holy and devout Ejaculations, spending much of their Time in converse with their Maker, and in earnest Addresses to Him, to forgive unto them all their past Errors; to beg and implore his Grace to be their Comfort in their old

εἰς τὰς προσευχάς.

old Age, and that He would not leave them in the needful time of their Trouble, their Sickneſs, their Pain, their Dying Hour.

Again, They muſt be watchful, to keep themſelves clear and free of Sin, to preſerve themſelves in a holy, blameleſs Behaviour; that they may be fit to meet the Lord, and to make their perſonal Appearrance before their Judge, which they are ſo ſuddenly to do. And therefore *Let not them ſleep as do others, but let* THEM (eſpecially) *Watch, and be Sober*, as the Apoſtle adviſes all Chriſtians, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 6.

This Watchfulneſs alſo conſiſts in their diligent Attendance upon all God's holy Or-

dinances. As for Example, in a conſcientious celebrating of God's Sabbaths, reſorting unto the Places where his Honour dwelleth, with all Devotion and Seriouſneſs of Soul; and and there hearing God's Word read and explained by his Miniſters, with an humble, obedient Ear; joyning their Hearts and their Mouths in the Prayers and Supplications that are put up there, for our ſelves, and for all the Wants and Neceſſicities of our Fellow-Chriſtians; in an univerſal ſpreading Charity: And as often as the holy Communion is adminiſtred, repairing unto God's Table, with Earneſt Minds, and holy Affections, to partake of that comfortable Commemoration of

of Christ's Death, and Passion; whereby he hath procured of his Father the Pardon and Remission of our Sins, to our endless Comfort and Benefit. And by these Ordinances, we draw near to God, and acquaint our selves with Him against the Time we hope for ever to dwell with Him, and to enjoy His Blessed Face. In these Ordinances we hold a Communion with God, and God with us; and we do accustom our selves to those very Exercises, that, if ever God vouchsafe to bring us to Glory, shall be in effect our great Employment there.

Thus the Aged Men should Watch. And what a happy thing would it be for them, if Death should find them thus

Watching. They ſhould (and I hope they do) conſider, that God will e're long ſend for them. And therefore it ſhould be their Endeavour, that whenſoever He doth ſend, He may find them upon their Knees, or at their Devotion, or buſied in ſome holy, good, charitable, or at leaſt warrantable, Exerciſe. And this is the firſt great Point of that Behaviour, that is ſo ſutable to the Aged, *That the Aged Men be SOBER*, or *Watchful*.

II. The Aged Man muſt be *Grave*; that is, his Carriage and outward Deportment muſt be managed in that Decency and Reverence, as may beſpeak the inward Goodneſs of his Mind. He muſt ſo demean

mean himself, that it may appear, That there is within him a true Sense of God and Goodness, and an Aversion to every thing that is foul, unjust and dishoneſt. All Lightneſs, Idleneſs, Vanity of Behaviour, Frothineſs of Speech, Playing, Toying, Sporting, Chambering and Wantonneſs in Words and Actions, and such like, so contrary to the *Decorum* of their Age; these things are by all means to be avoided by Men of Age and Years, so dissonant to Gravity. There must be a Severity in their Behaviour: They must not endure to see or to hear any thing that is immodeſt, or unseemly, much more that is vile and wicked. And if they are Magiſtrates,

they muſt ſhew their Diſlike of it, by puniſhing and correcting it: If of more ordinary Rank and Quality, they muſt reprove it, or withdraw themſelves from it, or give ſome plain Evidence of their Diſallowance and Diſapprovement of it.

There is a Lightneſs, and Frothineſs of Converſation which this preſent Generation of Ours is too much addicted to. And it is this in a great meaſure, (more than moſt are aware of) that doth ſo indiſpoſe and prejudice Men againſt Religion; which indeed will not away with it. For that is a Serious and Solid thing. It will not allow of that Airineſs of Behaviour, that Vanity and Idle

Idleneſs of Speech, and Trivial Converſation, that is in too great Faſhion and Vogue among us. It was a Saying of one of the Fathers, *Even the Sportings of Chriſtians ought to have a kind of Seriouſneſs in them.* Every Man ſhould do that which becomes him. And there is nothing becomes a Chriſtian, but what is virtuous, what is juſt, what is innocent, and what is modeſt, and what hath the ſtamp of Truth and Goodneſs on it. A Heathen gave us this Advice: *Reckon that nothing becomes you, but what is good.* And it is the Apoſtle's admirable Councel to his *Philippians*, in

Judicia Chriſtianorum debent eſſe ſeria.

Quod bonum eſt, hoc tantum te decere puta.

the

the Concluſion of his Epiſtle to them; *Whatſoever things are true, whatſoever things are* HONEST, (The word in the Text) *i.e.* Whatſoever things are *Grave*, or *Decent*, or *Agreeable* to your moſt holy Profeſſion) *Think on theſe things*,

Phil. iv. 8. ὅσα σεμνά.

This then ought to be the Deportment of all Chriſtians, all that have taken on them *Chriſt*'s holy Name; but chiefly all Elderly People. Their Years call upon them to be Grave; countenancing what is Good, diſcountenancing what ever is Evil. Which will ſhew the inward Good, and Godly Temper of their Minds and Spirits. The aged Men muſt be *Grave*,

or

or Serious: that is their ſecond Qualification.

III. They muſt be *Temperate*. An Aged Man muſt be a Man of Temper. Temper in his Paſſions. He muſt not be teſty, moroſe, and froward: a Vice to which Old Men are wont to be addicted. He muſt not be a *Demea*, as he in *Terence*, a peeviſh, fretful, captious Man. He muſt not be a *Nabal*, as he in the Book of *Samuel*, ſuch a Son of *Belial*, that a Man cannot ſpeak to him. There muſt be a Temper alſo in his Wrath. He muſt not let that impotent Paſſion rule him, and carry him beyond all the bounds of Reaſon and Decency, and hurry him away into Tranſports. Which commonly

monly make a Man utter many blaſphemous Oaths and Curſes, take up wicked and ungodly Reſolutions, and put him forward to unchriſtian Revenges, and implacable Animoſities. This alſo an Aged Man muſt take heed of.

There muſt alſo be a Temper in his Deſires of Earthly things. It is highly disbecoming a Man that is going into another World, to be griping and ſcraping for the Things of this. To oppreſs and vex his Creditors, his Tenants, his Underlings; to prog and cark for Wealth, and to fill his Bags, and to labour night and day for more and more of theſe fading Riches, and in the mean time

time to neglect the true Riches, that will make a Man rich to God, and furnish him with Treasures that will do him good in another World.

Thus the Aged must be Temperate. The Word indeed signifies, and is often translated *Sober*; and is the same Word with that in the sixth Verse, where Young Men are exhorted to be *Sober-minded*. It seems Sobriety is a Duty necessary to be urged both upon Old and Young: That is, both ought to lay Restraint upon their Lusts and Passions, to govern their Appetites, to keep themselves within due Bounds, and to be temperate in all things:

Σώφρονας.

things: Which is the true Notion of Sobriety. For the Old as well as the Young are apt to fly out, and to go beyond their due limits, that God and Nature hath ſet them: And ſo to draw Miſery, Trouble, Guilt and Deſtruction in the end, upon themſelves. That is the Third: The Aged muſt be Temperate, or Sober.

The three other Directions for Aged Men that remain, do more particularly reſpect them as they are Profeſſors of Chriſtian Religion: Which mainly conſiſts in Faith, in Charity, in Patience. And therefore Aged Chriſtians ſhould be found in all theſe Graces. Age hath rendred them frail, and weak in their Bodily Strength; but they

they must not be so in their Graces, but SOUND in them. And the longer they live, to the more Healthfulness in Spirit, and Soundness in all Christian Vertues they must aspire: And especially they must be found in these three.

I. In *Faith:* That is, in the Christian Doctrine. They must hold fast *Christ*'s Truth; that which is call'd *Sound* Doctrin, in the first Verse of this Chapter. This they must *Hold fast*, and maintain in their old Age, and not let go those holy Doctrines, that they have been taught, that *Form of sound Words*, wherein they have been instructed. And not as some are wont to do in their elder Years, to Apostatize

tize and Backslide, and to forsake the ancient Truth for new Doctrines, and be carried away with errors, by the subtile Invention of Deceivers and false Prophets, that come in Sheeps Cloathing. But the Aged who are come to Maturity of Years, should be of Mature Judgment, and to be too well grounded and principled in the Truth, to be inticed away by such as lay in wait to deceive unstable Souls. Thus the Aged must be found in Faith.

Or else he must be found in Faith, taking Faith to signify more particularly Faith and Trust in God. When Age comes upon us, and various Infirmities, Pains and Sicknesses attend it, and Troubles and Cares

Cares do now more than ever oppreſs our Minds; and the Reflexions it may be upon the infinite Miſcarriages of our paſt Lives deject us, what need have we then of this Faith in God, to enable us to rely upon him, and his Goodneſs, and his Promiſes? What need to put a firm Truſt and Confidence in him? To have an Eye of Faith to ſee him that is inviſible, and a Hand of Faith, to take faſt hold of him, and not to let him go? I mean to be poſſeſt with a good and well grounded Aſſurance, that he will not leave us in our Old Age, nor lay to our charge the Sins and Follies of our paſt Life, ſince we have repented of them, and forſaken them.

them. And this is to ſound be in Faith.

II. In *Charity.* Aged Men above all, who are going into another World, muſt not harbour Malice in their Hearts againſt any; but reduce themſelves to an hearty Love, and Good-will to every Man univerſally. The Man of Years muſt be endued with that εὐδο κία, that *Well-pleaſedneſs of Mind* to others, that φιλανθρω πία, that *Friendly Affection to Mankind*, that God hath declared himſelf to have towards us all. For he is going, as he hopes, to that God. And if he be not of that gracious, kind Temper that he is of, he muſt never expect to ſee his Face, nor to dwell in his Preſence.

For

For we must be like him, if ever we intend to live with him.

III. Lastly, he must be found in *Patience*. In Faith, in Charity, and in Patience. Patience in the New Testament often signifies Perseverance in the Faith of *Christ*, and Persistance in well-doing, notwithstanding all the Discouragements and Persecutions of an evil World: Upholding a Man's self by the strong and vigorous Expectation of the infinite Rewards to be bestowed in God's good Time. And this Patience, or patient Expectation, the Aged should be found in: Waiting for the Time when his God shall call him to himself to bestow upon him a Crown

Crown of Life, and ſay to him, *Well done, Good, and Faithful Servant, enter into the Joy of thy Lord.* He muſt be ſound and ſtrong in this Patience.

Or elſe, he muſt be ſound in Patience, as it importeth a quiet bearing of Sufferings and Pains, and Afflictions: Which in Old Age are wont to be more and greater than at any other Time. He muſt not be fretful and peeviſh under the Weakneſs and Infirmities of Old Age. He muſt not be angry, and diſpleaſed, and froward under the Calamities that lye upon him: but bear them with an even and conſtant Spirit, with Equanimity and Silence, not opening his Mouth in Impatience: As remem-

membring that it is but the condition of Humane Nature; and that it is what comes from God, for the Correction of our Faults, and for the Exercise of our Patience, and the Tryal of our Graces. And after this manner should the Aged be found in Patience.

And thus I have, under the Direction of this excellent Text, shewn what that becoming and truly Christian Behaviour is, that Men should exercise, when Age and Years are come upon them.

II.

I am now to endeavour by Arguments and Considerations to excite the Aged to this wise and

and good Demeanour. And for this purpose I shall lay before them these five or six Things.

I. *Age* expects Honour and Reverence to be pay'd it. And that deservedly; and the Scripture requires it: *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary Head, and honour the Person of the Aged.* And God did most signally once punish a parcel of loose Youths, for despising an aged, holy Man, and crying to him in Derision, *Go up, thou bald Pate, Go up, thou bald Pate,* 2 *King.* ii. 23. They were torn in pieces, Forty Two of them at once by Bears out of the Wood: A Warning to all succeeding Generations of the World, that the younger are to respect and reverence the Aged.

Aged. There is in truth a Deference to be given to Years: and we do with good Reaſon require it from the younger Sort.

But Alas! mere Age without ſome other Qualifications, will reconcile to us little Honour. An old Drunkard, an old Sot, an old Humoriſt, an old Sinner; who can honour ſuch, who have in that manner diſhonoured themſelves, and treaſured up Shame to their Old Age? But when Age is accompanied with Gravity and Wiſdom, and the Fear of God, that makes Age to be truly Honourable; and all Men will riſe up to ſuch an Hoary Head. His Hairs are a Crown of Glory to him. *The Hoary Head is*

a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousness, Prov. xvi. 31. When a Man walks in the way of Righteousness, and holds out therein unto old Age, that is the way to make Men revere and honour him: and that not only in the Body and the outward Deportment to give them Respect, but inwardly, to Love and Affect them.

II. We expect to find Wisdom and Counsel with the Aged. Years teach Wisdom; and Men that have lived a great while in the World, and seen Changes and Vicissitudes in Towns, in Cities, in Families, in Kingdoms, make Observations hence, and learn much Experience, and treasure up

up to themſelves Underſtanding, and are able to give Advice, Counſel and Inſtruction. And therefore Princes uſually make uſe of the Aged for their Counſellors, to conſult with them about their weighty Matters, as they do of the younger Sort for Action. And ſurely that Man hath ſpent his Years to little purpoſe, that is a Child in his Old Age; and tho he wears a Gray Head, hath ſtill but a Boys Underſtanding; that is raſh and fooliſh, vain and frothy ſtill, after he hath lived it may be Fifty or Sixty Years. What will ye never be Wiſe? Never know how to govern your Tongues, and your Appetites? Never be Men, capable to

Counsel and Avise your selves as long as ye live? To what purpose have ye spent so many a fair year, and seen so much? To be Fools at last, and to dye as Fools dye, in their Sins and Follies?

We use to say, every Man at Thirty Years of Age is either a Fool or a Physitian; That is, by living so long he hath learned by Experience the State and Condition of his own Body; so that he is become in a tolerable sort able to be his own Physitian, to know what is good and what is bad for him; Or else he is a Fool. But how many are there that have lived to Thirty Years of Age twice told, that are very sorry Physitians to their Souls, and

and but mere Fools ſtill; void of all Underſtanding to take the proper Courſes for their Souls Welfare? To ſuch elderly Fools I may, I think, cry out as Wiſdom doth, *O ye ſimple Ones! how long will ye love Simplicity? Prov.* i. 22. How long? What? to Old Age? What? to the Day of your Death? This ye ſee, O ye Aged Men, reflects cloſely upon your Underſtanding at this Time of Day. For with the Aged we all look for Wiſdom and Counſel. But

III. To purſue this Argument a little further. Aged Men and Women have lived long enough to be thorowly convinced of the Vanity of the World, and of the miſerable

Issues of Sin. And will they not yet be Sober, Grave, Temperate?

First, They have seen by long Experience the Vanity of this World. So that methinks they should be able to say as *David* did, *I have seen an end of all Perfection*, Psal. cxix. 96. And as *Solomon*, *I have seen all the Works that are done under the Sun, and behold all is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*, Eccl. i. 14. All these Things that Men are apt to set their Hearts upon, to mind too much, to the neglect of their Duty to God and to their Neighbours, and to themselves: to pursue Night and Day by Right and by Wrong; Imagining Honour & Wealth, and these fading Pleasures of the

the World to be brave things. And alas! in the End they are but mere Vanity, and Vexation of Spirit.

They are *Vanity*. They are vain, they are false, they are lying. They deceive us: they promise us more than they can perform. Or else they are Vain, they fly away from us, and leave us in a Fools Paradise.

And they are *Vexation of Spirit*. They Vex and Disturb us; they gall and chafe us a Thousand Ways; and our Spirits find no Rest, no Satisfaction in them. Doth not every Aged Person, that hath lived any considerable time in this World, perceive and learn this by the Observations he

hath made in himself and in others?

And therefore is it not time now for him, (if he hath not hitherto been so) to be Sober, Grave and Wise, considering the long Experience he hath had of these Vanities of the World, and how it hath frustrated his Expectations.

Secondly, Aged Men have also seen by long Experience, the miserable Issues of Sin; and will they still continue in it, and never forsake it? Have they in their Time seen Hundreds and Hundreds undone and ruined by it, and yet will they follow them, and take no Warning still? Have they in their Days seen Thousands of Sinners fall on their Right Hand,

Hand, and Ten Thouſands on their Left, by their own Follies and vicious Practices? Have they beheld, how God hath met with thoſe that have ſet themſelves againſt him by wicked Works, and hath ſtruck them down with his Mighty Hand? And this done ſometimes in ſuch a manner, as if God had intended that all might ſee it and take Warning. Have they not ſeen, how God hath cut off the Poſterity of the Wicked; and how Riches got by Wrong, Knavery and Oppreſſion, have not continued? Have they not had abundance of Experience of theſe and the like remarkable Concluſions of Sin and Violation of God's moſt holy Laws and

Precepts? What Advantages are these administred to the Aged to make them Sober and Wise, to leave those Follies that to their Knowledge others have so smarted for?

And it ought to be look'd upon by them as the wonderful Grace of God to them, that he hath spared them so long, to see and be convinced of these things; that they may repent, and dedicate their Old Age unto God and his Service.

IV. How many remarkable Providences hath God exercised the Aged with through the long Course of Life they have lived? And to what Purpose, but to remind them of him, to reclaim them from some

ſome evil Ways they have choſen, to make them recollect themſelves, repent and amend, to grow wiſe and good? It is Religious, to look upon all the Notable Accidents of our Lives as peculiarly coming from God for holy and good Ends towards us. And it is a great Fault in Men, when they have eſcaped ſome imminent Danger, or obtained ſome extraordinary Benefit, or fallen into ſome ſad Sickneſs, or Calamity, I ſay, it is a great fault in any, when it thus happens to them, not to acknowledge God in this, nor to ſee his Hand; but to paſs it over ſtupidly, without any particular Contemplation of God, or Remembrance that

this

this was his Doing; This is highly blameworthy. As *Jacob* ſpake in another Caſe, *Surely God was in this Place*, ſo ought we to ſay upon any extraordinary Providence, Surely God was here; The Finger of God was in this Deliverance. In this Emergence God called me to remembrance. This ſevere Stroke was God's Rod: This Loſs was God's Correction, to bring me from ſuch or ſuch Sins, to which I have been too much addicted.

Of theſe remarkable Providences of God we have all partook, but moſt of all they that have lived long in the World. If they would but bethink themſelves, what a vaſt Number of them hath happened in their

their Lives? What long Stories may they tell of the Dealings of God with them; what a Train of Mercies hath followed them; What Straits he hath delivered them out of; What Preservations he hath wrought for them even in the very Jaws of Destruction? How hath he brought them up even from the Valley of the Shadow of Death? How hath he sometimes given them that which they have most earnestly sought for and desired, to the infinite Comfort and Satisfaction of their Lives? And how hath he it may be sometimes not granted them that which they desired, out of Mercy and Goodness. Which Desire if they had had fulfilled

to

to them, would have proved their Undoing, or their perpetual Affliction. Such ill Chooſers we oftentimes are for our ſelves. How many, ſundry and various have theſe Diſpenſations of God been to Aged Men? And ſhould not all this make them turn to God, Love him, and Fear him, and adhere to him, and frame the laſt Scene of their Lives to ſuch Courſes as may pleaſe him?

V. What a ſad Sign will he give of deſperate Stupidity and final Impenitency, that ſtill even in his Old Age lyes ſoaking in his Sins, and wallowing in the Mire of his unclean Luſts and Paſſions? *I know that God hath determined to de-*

ſtroy

ſtroy thee, becauſe thou haſt done this, and haſt not hearkened unto my Counſel, ſaid the Prophet to *Amaziah*, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 16. And we may ſay to the ſame effect, We know too, that God hath purpoſed to deſtroy a Man, when his Wickedneſs continues with him in his Old Age; and the laſt Days he hath to live in this World are even of the ſame Thred with the former: And negligently enough ſpent. One may conclude it ſome judicial Obduration ſent from God upon a Sinner, when his Old Days are his worſt Days, and the longer he lives the Worſe he is. When under all the Means of Grace, and the Calls of God by his Miniſters for many hundred

of

of Sabbaths that he hath lived, he remains like a Stock or a Stone, and hath not left a Sin, nor parted with one Folly, to which he was addicted before.

Oh! lay this to heart, and tremble all you Aged People, that are Aged in Sin too. It looks I say like a desperate Stupidity, or a Judgment of Impenitency sent upon you by God in terrible Justice.

VI. Lastly, Antient Folks are drawing near that solemn day, when they must depart out of the World, and give up to their Judge an Account of the spending of their Lives. They are as St. *Paul* speaks of himself, *ready to be offered up, and the Time of their Dissolution*

on draweth nigh. Should it not therefore be their Care to bring themſelves to ſuch a Frame as to be able to ſay, as he doth upon the ſame occaſion, *I have fought the good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe*, (or my Race) *I have kept the Faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs*, 2 *Tim.* iv. 7, 8. O happy that antient Man that can ſuſtain his Soul in theſe Contemplations! that can look back upon his paſt Life with Comfort, and that can look forward upon the Life he is entring into without Fear. Whoſe ſincere Love to God caſts out that Fear that hath torment in it, that tormenting Fear of Hell, and of going into everlaſting

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Perdition, the ſure Reward of a looſe exorbitant Life.

The Aged are waiting till their Change cometh. The Sands of their Glaſs are waſted: their Strength and Vigour abated: Diſeaſes and Infirmities creep upon them; and they know their Time here cannot be long: and they have one Foot, as we ſay, in the Grave already. Doth it not infinitely concern them to be Sober, Grave, Temperate, Sound in Faith, in Charity, in Patience? That when God comes and calls for them, they may be found in him, and receive his *Well done, good and faithful Servant.*

And thus I have finiſhed thoſe Conſiderations that I had

had to recommend unto the Aged in order to the rendring them Sober and Virtuous.

III.

And nothing now remains, but to make some Conclusion of this Discourse. Which must be by way of Address to those elderly Persons that hear me this Day.

You O Fathers and Brethren! are by the great Patience and Favour of God, arrived to Maturity of years; You have seen Abundance of Chances and Changes in your Days. You have seen wonderful Revolutions in Kingdoms and States. You have seen the Policies of the World baffled, and strange

Dif-

Disappointments happening to humane Affairs: And even there where Men have been most confident: And many other Things of such a Nature, that you cannot but acknowledge an Almighty Hand and Wisdom therein. You must own that there is a great King that sits above, and that controuls all Sublunary Things, and exerciseth a notable Providence among us; and takes particular Notice of Men and their Doings. And do not you fear and adore this great and mighty God? And whatsoever others do, those that have not seen so much of *God's* wondrous Works as you have, yet for your Part, you, I hope, Sanctify him in your hearts, and

make

make him your Fear and your Dread. *I write unto you Fathers*, (or Antient Men) *because ye have known him that is from the Beginning*, 1 *Joh.* ii. 13. St. *John* takes it for granted, that *Fathers*, Men of Years and Experience, know him that is from the Beginning. *They know him*, that is, they so know him and have Experience of his Doings, as to fear, serve and obey this God that is *from the Beginning*, from all Eternity.

O take you heed to your selves; and you that are Gray in Hairs, be not Gray in Sin. Carry not your Guilt with you to your Graves. But let your Years remind you of the years of Eternity. Make amends for

for the Vanities of your
by the Sobriety and
and Godlineſs of your
Serve the Lord now
with the moſt vigorous
ctions, and dedicate
maining Sands of your
his Glory. Let
be in an aged Body
nearer you come
your Days,
the fitter
more Devo
more frequent
Meditation, and the more will
ing to depart and
Chriſt. Which
Mercy grant that we may do
through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.
Amen.